

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the Application.

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4. **(currently amended)** The method of claim 3, wherein the distance mapping technique comprises identifying users ~~accessing~~viewing web pages having words or phrases of cognitive similarity.
5. **(currently amended)** The method of claim 3, wherein the distance mapping technique comprises comparing a Uniform Resource Identifier (URI) address of the web page that the user ~~has accessed~~is viewing to URI addresses of the other web pages being ~~accessed~~viewed by other users.
6. **(currently amended)** The method of claim 1, wherein displaying for the user a listing of ~~[[the]]~~ other users further comprises displaying the listing of other users in a graphical user interface (GUI).
7. (original) The method of claim 6, wherein the GUI comprises a web browser.
8. **(currently amended)** The method of claim 1, further comprising enabling the user to ~~[[view]]~~access profile data associated with one or more of the other users selected from the displayed listing ~~of other users~~.
9. (original) The method of claim 8, wherein the profile data comprises one or more of contact information, demographic information, profession, hobbies, or interests.

10. **(currently amended)** The method of claim 1, wherein enabling the user to communicate with one or more of the other users selected from the displayed listing ~~of other users~~ further comprises enabling the user to instant message one or more of the other users selected from the displayed listing ~~of other users~~.
11. **(currently amended)** The method of claim 1, wherein enabling the user to communicate with one or more of the other users selected from the displayed listing ~~of other users~~ further comprises enabling the user to e-mail one or more of the other users selected from the displayed listing ~~of other users~~.
12. **(currently amended)** The method of claim 1, wherein enabling the user to communicate with one or more of the other users selected from the displayed listing ~~of other users~~ further comprises enabling the user to initiate a voice over Internet protocol (VoIP) communication with one or more of the other users selected from the displayed listing ~~of other users~~.
13. **(currently amended)** The method of claim 1, wherein enabling the user to communicate with one or more of the other users selected from the displayed listing ~~of other users~~ further comprises enabling the user to initiate a transaction with one or more of the other users selected from the displayed listing ~~of other users~~.
14. **(original)** The method of claim 13, wherein the transaction comprises an exchange of currency.

15. (original) The method of claim 13, wherein the transaction comprises an exchange of at least one of airline frequent flier miles, or affinity program points.
16. (original) The method of claim 1, further comprising enabling the user to execute a search query against a search engine.
17. **(currently amended)** The method of claim 16, wherein results of the search query comprise a listing of one or more web pages, and wherein each of the one or more web pages listed is displayed with an associated visual indicator displaying a number of users currently accessing~~viewing~~ that respective web page.
18. **(currently amended)** A system for enabling identification of network users having similar interests~~[[,]]~~ and facilitating communication between them, the system comprising:
 - ~~means for identifying a web page that a user is viewing;~~
 - ~~means for determining the presence of other users at or near the web page that the user is viewing;~~
 - means for calculating a virtual distance between a~~the~~ web page that a~~the~~ user is accessing~~viewing~~ and other web pages accessed~~viewed~~ by the other users, wherein the web page that is the user is accessing and each of the other web pages comprise any web page on the Internet;
 - means for displaying for the user a listing of the other users determined to be within a predetermined virtual distance from the first web page that the user has accessed~~is viewing~~; and

means for enabling the user to communicate with one or more of the other users selected from the displayed listing ~~of other users~~.

19. **(currently amended)** A method for enabling identification of network users having similar interests, and facilitating communication between them, the method comprising:

identifying a data object that a user is accessing;

determining a listing of other users that are currently accessing or that have recently accessed the data object;

~~displaying~~filtering for the user the listing of ~~[[the]]~~other users ~~filtered~~ based on an affinity between data associated with the user and data associated with the other users; ~~[[and]]~~

displaying the filtered listing of the other users; and

enabling the user to communicate with one or more of the other users selected from the displayed filtered listing ~~of other users~~.

20. **(previously presented)** The method of claim 19, wherein the affinity between the data associated with the user and data associated with the other users is determined using similarity of profile attributes.

21. **(new)** The method of claim 1, wherein the method comprises identifying the web page that the user is accessing.

22. (new) The method of claim 1, wherein the method comprises determining the presence of other users at or near the web page that the user is accessing.
23. (new) The system of claim 18, wherein the system comprises means for identifying the web page that the user is accessing.
24. (new) The system of claim 18, wherein the system comprises means for determining the presence of other users at or near the web page that the user is accessing.
25. (new) A method for enabling identification of a network user having similar interests to a first user and facilitating communication between them, the method comprising:

calculating a virtual distance between a first web page that a first user is accessing and a second web page accessed by a second user, wherein the first web page and the second web page comprise any web page on the Internet;

wherein upon the second web page being determined to be within a predetermined virtual distance from the first web page, enabling the first user to communicate with the second user.
26. (new) The method of claim 1, wherein the method comprises tracking the virtual location of the user and each of the other users anywhere on the Internet.
27. (new) The system of claim 18, wherein the system comprises means for tracking the virtual location of the user and each of the other users anywhere on the Internet.